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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000184

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [ASEC](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: HOT TOPICS WITHIN THE CNDD - NATIONAL TRANSITION
COUNCIL, NEW POLITICAL LEADERSHIP, AND MILITARY REFORM

Classified By: A/DCM SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

¶1. (C) SUMMARY. A youth leader close to the CNDD claims that CNDD President Moussa Dadis Camara is planning to create a National Transition Council, which will serve as an interim legislative body, tasked with not only constitutional and electoral form, but possibly a broader legislative agenda. Meanwhile, Contact said that the CNDD is looking to "promote new leaders" as they are disgusted with the country's current array of political candidates. In addition, Dadis is reportedly preoccupied with the need for military reform, but proceeding cautiously in order to avoid any potential revolts. Contact's standing with the CNDD is unclear, but he does have direct access and provides useful insights into what is being discussed behind closed doors. END SUMMARY.

¶2. (C) On March 25, Pol/Econ Chief met with Thierno Balde, the head of a local human rights NGO. He is also a youth leader who continues to work closely with members of the military junta. Although his personal political ambitions and beliefs indicate a lack of objectivity, Thierno continues to provide interesting insights into the behind the scenes workings of the CNDD (National Council for Democracy and Development) and its president, Moussa Dadis Camara.

AN APPOINTED LEGISLATURE WITH A BROAD MANDATE

¶3. (C) During the course of the meeting, Thierno mentioned that he was finishing up a draft piece of legislation that deals with freedom of the press issues, public access to information, and administrative regulations for the media regulatory board. Pol/Econ Chief questioned how such draft legislation would be passed into law given that Guinea currently lacks a legislative body. Thierno said that Dadis is planning to set up a National Transitional Council (CNT), which will then serve as a national legislature. In addition to the media legislation, Thierno said that the CNT would certainly review the constitution and the electoral code, and probably the mining code as well.

¶4. (C) In response to a series of questions, Thierno explained that the CNDD currently plans for the CNT to have 98 members (possibly more) which will be broadly drawn from civil society. He emphasized that various organizations will be able to name their own representatives. "For example, the unions will have x number of seats and they can choose who will fill those seats." However, Thierno was concerned that Guineans would revert to "Guinean ways" by nominating representatives based on political or family connections rather than practical qualifications. "Of course, I'm hoping to be one of the members," Thierno added.

¶5. (C) Pol/Econ Chief raised concerns about the legitimacy of legislation passed by a body appointed by a military junta, which would then presumably have to be approved by the

president of the CNDD. "Yes, but you know it is much easier to pass this kind of legislation during a transition period," Thierno replied. When Pol/Econ Chief pointed out that the anticipated "ease" of passing might be related to the lack of democratic institutions and therefore democratic processes, Thierno readily agreed, emphatically saying "exactly!"

PROMOTING NEW POLITICAL LEADERS

¶16. (C) Thierno emphasized that political reform is critical to an effective transition because the country's leading political candidates are just going to perpetuate past problems if the system is not fixed first. He maintained that the political candidates are only interested in getting elected and winning power, not in articulating an actual strategy to move Guinea forward. According to Thierno, former Prime Minister Sidya Toure (and head of the UFR) is lobbying the CNDD to replace Komara as Guinea's current prime minister. "He may be successful too," Thierno commented. He added that another unidentified political leader told Thierno that if the CNDD fails to organize elections by the end of the year, he was going to try and lobby the CNDD for a ministerial position.

¶17. (C) "If we continue with the leaders we have now, nothing will change," Thierno said. When Pol/Econ Chief asked Thierno how the country plans to proceed given that these are the political candidates they have, Thierno said that "new leaders are coming." When asked to clarify, he said "we are planning to promote new leaders." However, he refused to

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elaborate on just what "promoting new leaders" might mean.

LOOKING TO MILITARY REFORM

¶18. (C) In response to a question about how to ensure that the military return to the barracks once a civilian government is in place, Thierno said that the issue is a sensitive one. "Reforming the military is Dadis' top priority, but he has to proceed very carefully." Thierno said that the CNDD is preparing a military retirement list, but Dadis is biding his time because he does not want to risk sparking another mutiny or a counter-coup. "When he has more authority, then he can act," Thierno said. Pol/Econ Chief pointed out that Dadis already holds the highest position in the country, asking what additional authority Dadis hopes to gain. Thierno explained that with time in office and concrete successes, Dadis will become more secure in his position, and then more willing to address the military reform issue.

POSSIBLE RECONSTITUTION OF THE CNDD

¶19. (C) Thierno also mentioned that the CNDD may be reconstituted although he provided few details. He commented that certain members, such as 1st Vice President and Minister of Security Toto Camara and Minister of Commerce Korka, have lost credibility so Dadis is looking to restructure the junta.

COMMENT

¶10. (C) A lawyer by trade with an advanced degree from Stanford University, Thierno has been talking about the creation of a pseudo-legislative body since the coup. It is unclear whether the CNDD is actually moving in this direction or if this is just wishful thinking on Thierno's part, although Les Forces Vives did just present Dadis with a

transition proposal calling for a National Transition Council. Either way, Thierno clearly envisions this appointed legislative body with a much broader mandate than constitutional and electoral reform. Thierno appears to be caught between his desire for a quick transition to civilian rule and a comprehensive overhaul of the system while the junta is still in power. He continues to play both sides and while he has excellent access to the CNDD, his standing with the junta is unclear. END COMMENT.
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